1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.185-C]

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *begbe*.

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Costermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[CP. 230-A)

422 owned or merely possessed by the individual is not answerable at the moment. It would seem that utensils are in fact owned by the women and spears and bows and arrows by the men, but hunting nets appear to be subject to collective control, not only over their positioning during the hunts but also over their participation itself. Further, it is recorded in the notes that on occasion a hunting net that has not produced game for the community may be burned. All we know is that, when it is burned it is done with the approval of the community, though apparently on the initiative of the
428 "owning" family. There is no detailed information on inheritance, only the general observation that girls inherit from their mothers, men from their fathers.

421 It seems, first, that the forest and both its animal and vegetable produce are considered by
• [186] the net hunters to be the property of the Mbuti as a whole, as opposed to the alien
[621] villagers. Second, it seems that any one section of the forest belongs to the band that hunts that section. But, although the band may be said to own a part of the forest and its members have an equal right to the produce, the equality is of opportunity rather than of division. A

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a
[602] grandfather's name is another indication of the lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor
[614] names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
[101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
595 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246- B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Intermarriage

As pointed out above, this traffic is one-way. There are no records of Pygmy men taking villager wives, nor any acknowledged instances of Pygmy men begetting children by villager mistresses. Blood counts (Schebesta, 1938, 111), however, reveal a small proportion of villager influence in hunting communities, which may or may not be accounted for by the return of the half-breed offspring from the village to the forest. Normally the children of such unions are brought up as villagers. The father will, to the best of his ability, prevent children by his Pygmy wife from returning to the forest, and apparently the Pygmies themselves regard such children as villagers.

There are not enough data on individual intermarriage for us to determine how far this one-way tendency is a form of hypergamy. It may, in fact, simply be the result of the practical consideration that no villager woman could fulfill the requirements of a woman and wife in a Pygmy hunting camp. Even if the latter is the case, it does not answer the question as to why a Pygmy girl should marry a villager. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that gives us even the hint of an answer. There is certainly no

[P.251-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar circumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association.

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

This analysis, in any case, could stand only by isolating the *nkumbi* or by relating it only to other villager institutions in the villager society. When we try to relate the *nkumbi* to Pygmy institutions, Schebesta's interpretation cannot hold.

In the 1954 *nkumbi* there was a very evident divorce between initiative and authority. The villagers took most of the initiative; they decided when the *nkumbi* should be held and made all the necessary arrangements. Villagers carried out the operations and gave all the instruction. But their authority over the Pygmy *gama* (members of the *nkumbi*) was far from complete. The Pygmies decided which boys should take part, without reference to the villagers; though they made use of Effundi Somali, a village chief, to reinforce their own demand that a certain boy should take part (Turnbull, 1957, 197). During and following the operation, the Mbuti fathers acted contrary to villager custom and in the face of villager disapproval by comforting their children. Both fathers and children ignored the various taboos imposed by the vil-

[1] The burlesquing attitude of the Mbuti is significant but could possibly be interpreted merely as a psychological reaction to subordination. It is in the light of other facts that we think differently.

[P 252-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.253-A]
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lagers when it suited them to do so. In the dispute over the visit of the *ganza* to the forest hunting camp, the villagers were quite unable to enforce their will or even to enforce the compromise they finally effected with the Mbuti. The villagers themselves made no major decisions concerning the arrangement or carrying out of the *nkumbi* without at least discussing the matter with the Pygmy fathers. No difference was observable in the preparations or the ceremony that could be attributed to the fact that Mbuti only were being initiated.

The account given shows not only the extent to which the villagers were unable to control the *ganza*, but also the thoroughness with which they attempted to dominate the initiation. Despite the fact that the *ganza* were entirely Pygmy, for the villagers the *nkumbi* was nonetheless sacred. They were interested in the *nkumbi* itself rather than in the individuals participating. Whether or not the villagers thought that by initiating the Mbuti they were subjecting them to tribal and supernatural authority is uncertain, though Schebesta (1952, 278; 1948, chap. 7) so suggests. The evidence considered here suggests that the villagers not only lacked control over the Pygmy *ganza*, but were not particularly rigorous in maintaining it, except in so far as any desecration of the initiation camp or the *nkumbi* itself was concerned. It seems that the villager was primarily interested in the *nkumbi* as a tribal festival; if any subordination of the Pygmies took place, it was incidental.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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• 186
881 Similarly any subordination on the part of the Pygmies was incidental and insignificant, though they lost no opportunity for maintaining their individuality when their feelings clashed with those of the villagers. Unlike the latter, they had no interest in the *nkumbi* as such. This lack of interest was manifest from the outset, when the village was in a state of festive turmoil in preparation for the ceremony, and the Pygmy camp was unchanged. This lack of interest was frequently manifest as total disrespect. Apart from the breaking of such touch and food taboos as were imposed by villager custom, and the general burlesquing among the *ganza* as described in the account, there was the attitude of the rest of the Mbuti band—notably the women and children. The [857] young children in their forest camp found a new game to play. They were the *ganza*, imitating all

[P 253-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 253-C]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, including some of the ordeals. They not only knew the initiation songs, but were taught them by their mothers, who even more than their uninitiated male children were supposed to be in complete ignorance of such matters.

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the instructors did not come with them, and the *ganza* had only occasional visits from one villager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting camp. There were no ordeals during this time, no singing except when visited by the solitary villager, and no other form of instruction by the Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to be, for both children and the adult members of the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors of the initiation school.

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, they could scarcely avoid respecting the physical discipline imposed by the various ordeals they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P
177
186
881
Z
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If we look at the situation in reverse, the fact that the Mbuti simultaneously participate in the *nkumbi* and reject its significance indicates the instability of their relationship with the villagers. The villagers would undoubtedly like to assert their superiority but are unable to maintain effective control over the nomadic Mbuti, either as individuals or in bands, during the *nkumbi* or at any other time. The *nkumbi*, however, does at least place the villagers in an overt position of dominance. On the other hand, the Mbuti would like to be completely free from subordination to the villagers, yet they find it as necessary to submit to initiation in villager society as the villagers find it necessary to accept them as candidates. The *nkumbi* undoubtedly gives the villagers an opportunity to drive the first blow in asserting their superiority over the Mbuti, but at the same time it gives the Pygmy status, as well as economic benefits, in any village throughout the region. It also strengthens his own identity as a Pygmy by enabling him to reject the villager system of values in mimetic burlesque. The 1954 *nkumbi* shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

[P. 255-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

In the final section we consider some legends collected by Anne Putnam among these same Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*.

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

In order to understand the Pygmy values more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti rejection of villager values is effectively valid and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by four of the more important hunters belonging to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters

[P. 259-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P
539
177
186
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The Mbuti, as might be imagined, tell it differently.

The Mbuti were out hunting termites because, as you know, termites are good to eat. They built their houses. When night arrived the wives cooked food for their husbands. Then they all went to sleep. But in the middle of the night they heard a cry, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" "What is that?" said one Pygmy. "It is coming from over there!" cried another, pointing into the Forest. "Yes, it is a great noise coming from the old *liboyo* tree!" shouted a third. "We should go and see what it is!" They took their spears and crept up to the old *liboyo* tree. There they found a large hole in the ground, and they thought they could see faces peering up at them. But it was very dark, and they were afraid to go too close, so they returned to their camp.

"Tomorrow we shall go and see what it is all about," they said. "We shall go and we shall smoke it out of the hole, whatever it is."

The next morning they went back to the *liboyo* tree, carrying bundles of sticks and some fire wrapped up in *mongongo* leaves. They put the fire to the wood and started filling the hole with smoke. Then they heard voices calling out from the hole: "I'm dying, I'm dying! Oh, let me out, Brother, I'm dying!"

The Pygmies stopped the smoke and hurried to

[P. 262- B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P 262-C]

help whatever it was out of the hole, and out came people—Real People—much bigger than themselves, holding their heads and crying. They were villagers. "Where do you come from?" asked the Pygmies. "We don't know!" answered the Real People. "We fell into the hole by the old *liboyo* tree and then you started filling it with smoke. We should have died if you had not helped us out."

The Pygmies took the Real People with them, back to their termite camp, saying: "Come back with us to our termite camp. Now we shall all live together; there will be no fighting between us. You will be the Real People, truly, truly; you will be the Real People, truly."

Basi

But the Mbuti have their own notions as to the origin of the "Real People." This legend characterizes their attitude to the villager—an attitude they never express in the presence of the villager, finding it more profitable to let the villagers continue to think that even the Mbuti themselves recognize the great superiority of the "Real People."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

How the Real People Began[1]

539
186.

In the old days there was a Savage. This Savage had a big house. She was a strange-looking woman. Not only was she tall and skinny and bony, but she had a mouth like a hippopotamus, and her stomach was enormous and her body covered with arrows. In the even older days she had had two husbands, but now both were dead. She said: "Now I'm all alone; everyone has left my village. But I'll get even. Anyone that comes by, I'll eat them."

And that is how the trouble started. She had a medicine that she put out to attract people, and when they came by she would say: "This is my house." If they became frightened and went away, her medicine brought them back. And always, she ate them. She ate them whole. She ate them one after another. Her stomach got larger and larger.

Then all the people she had eaten whole had babies and she soon had a flourishing village. She did not eat these people. They built lots of houses.

Basi

The remaining three legends in this section explain how the Pygmies got fire, how the "Real People" tricked them out of the plantains they discovered (which is why the Pygmies have none), and, finally, how war began between Pygmies and villagers. Again the villagers are at fault. A Pygmy is tapping away in a tree, chopping out some honey, and some villagers

[1] As told by a Pygmy.

[P. 262-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.263-A]

539 passing by hear the noise and shoot at it with
• 186 an arrow. But even though wounded, the clever Pygmy remains very still, so the villagers think they must have been mistaken and go on. Then the Pygmy cuts them off and lies in wait and kills one of them as they come to him. And that began the war.

2. Legends Dealing with Social Relations

539 In this group we have a few legends telling
593 of the good mother (who protects her daughter
577 against nasty villagers) and the good father (who looks after his son when out hunting); the good sister (who protects her baby brother against a *satani*, a forest spirit); and the good brother (who does not quarrel with his brothers).

539 Social behavior is extolled in a similarly pos-
577 itive vein. Marriage and divorce, cooperative effort in the food quest, war and feud, hospitality to strangers—these are common topics, treated by telling how the reasonable Pygmy behaves in any of these situations. The remainder of the legends in this group deal with virtue and vice.

1: Turnbull E 4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P·264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently 539
associated with smallness. In several legends 828
the whole purport is the superiority (in this 825
respect) of small animals over large. It is not [186].
difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal
as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and
stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on
the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and
the human worlds are related with regard to
this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality
that seems to be essentially animal rather than
Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imita-
tion, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively
satisfactory relationship between the two
worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy
into relationship with the spiritual world. It is
through cleverness, for instance, that he is able
to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

Old age, with its greater store of experience, 539
connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people 828
are regarded as possessing a special abundance 577
of this quality, which automatically associates 888
them more closely with the animal and spiritual

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 825 "We'll fight him." One of the chimpanzees grabbed at the Pygmy, but meanwhile the Pygmy had taken up his spear. The Pygmy killed the chimpanzee. The others said, "What did the Pygmy kill our brother with?" And one answered, "It seemed to be with the root of a tree." So another of the chimpanzees gathered up the roots of the trees and threw them at the Pygmy. The Pygmy killed him with his spear. The remaining chimpanzees sat down and tried to puzzle this out. One of them searched all round and found the spear. He took it and killed the Pygmy. The chimpanzees then gathered some leaves and put them over the Pygmy. They all left.

The Pygmy's brother went to look for him. He found him dead, covered with leaves. He said, "What could have happened? Who killed my brother?"

Basi

539 825 828 Leopards and turtles are tricky animals that teach the Pygmy much of his cleverness in legend. They appear frequently, and it is always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed. But here we consider another aspect of these

539 825 828 186 animal tales. Not only is it always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed, thus automatically associating them with the supernatural, if only indirectly, but they are often identified with villagers. In talking of villagers, in legend, more often than not the Pygmy gives them animal form. The villager is very defi-

[P. 266-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 266-C]

nitely not included on the human side of the opposition between the animal and human worlds (the villager is often associated with an excess of cleverness). A frequently heard motif is for a Pygmy to wound an animal with a spear or an arrow. The animal escapes, carrying away the weapon. Later, the Pygmy discovers that weapon, covered with blood, hidden in the house of some Bira villager. The Pygmy then knows that he had, in fact, wounded a villager who had changed into an animal.

539 825 186 [828]

The collection includes one very similar legend in which exactly the same motif is used, accounting for enmity between two Pygmy hunting groups. A Pygmy wounds an elephant with a spear, and the elephant escapes, carrying away the spear. The Pygmy's father sends his son off to look for the lost spear. On his way through a village, he meets a Bira who says he has seen the spear in the hut of the Pygmy's best friend, another Pygmy. The Bira helps to conceal the unfortunate hunter in his friend's hut; at night, when his friend is sleeping, he

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

searches and finds his spear. But, as he is escaping, he is seen by other Pygmies who say, "Oh! So it was you who tried to kill our brother; we will kill you." 539 825 186.

In the ensuing fight the elephant hunter kills all the other Pygmies and returns to his father who is well satisfied.

The Bira villagers frequently turn into elephants and take advantage of their great size to make war on the Pygmies, destroying the forest as they do so. They are bad enough at the best of times, in Pygmy estimation, but apparently they become elephants when they are particularly bad.

A Bira and his wife had a terrible fight. The wife decided to leave and go to her mother's village, but her husband followed her. And as he followed, he turned into an elephant. He crashed through the forest and destroyed everything in sight. His wife heard the great noise and climbed a tree. The elephant tracked her down and started to knock the tree down. He charged at it and tore at it, but try as he might he could not pull it down. His wife held on tightly. Then she called to the Pygmies. The Pygmies heard her and came to her rescue. When she saw them she told them to kill the elephant. They attacked it with spears. They speared it again and again, but it would not die. It charged at the Pygmies and drove them back, right back to the Bira village. There the elephant spoke and said, "You have tried to kill me, your friend, a Bira." The Pygmies replied:

[P 266-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.267-A]

539 "But you have turned into an elephant and tried to
825 kill your wife. Because of that you must cross over to
• 186 the other side of the river and die." The elephant said, "You want to kill me?" "Yes," said the Pygmies. "You have become a very bad elephant." So the elephant went across to the other side of the river. The Pygmies went back and took his wife to her mother.

Basi

539 We next examine some of the legends that
825 very definitely attach supernatural attributes to certain animals and birds. There is a legend that warns against annoying porcupines. A Pygmy that tries to smoke some porcupines out of their hole is attacked, driven into another hole, and turned into an animal. Similarly a pangolin, if annoyed, has the power to drag its tormentor down into the world of the ancestors, through a great hole in the ground.

But some of the strangest tales concern birds. Above is an account of the *konga* bird that helped the Pygmy who stole the sweet nuts to kill his brother. Another, unidentified bird is popular in legend—the Bird with the Beautiful Song. It sings the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest has ever heard.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 267-C]

of the *fifi* is told with great awe by the Mbuti; it is reproduced here in full. 539 825

There was once a poor Pygmy girl. She was crippled, and her skin was full of disease. She was only about eight years old. The Pygmies were breaking camp. Nobody was willing to carry the little cripple for fear of catching the disease. So when all the Pygmies had left the camp, the little girl was all alone, by herself. She cried and she cried and she cried. And when night fell she crawled into her empty hut and she cried herself to sleep.

At daybreak she heard a sound like: "Pip! Pip! Pip!" It was the bird called the *fifi* bird. It had fastened a long rattan vine between two trees, and it was sitting on the vine swinging back and forth, back and forth. The little girl went to look more closely, and the bird flew away.

In the distance there was a Bira villager with his hunting trap. Seeing the diseased cripple he came up and said: "My poor child, you have been left here all by yourself . . . I must kill you." And he took his knife and lifted it to kill the girl. But the knife caught his nose and cut it. It killed him and he fell down dead. The girl caught hold of the rattan vine, and she swung herself back and forth, back and forth. 539 825 186.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

As she was swinging on the vine, another Bira villager, seeing the movement, came slowly into the clearing. "What is this?" he said to himself. "Why, it is a crippled little Pygmy girl. Get off your vine swing, my child, and come over here to me." 539 825 186

The girl got down from her swing and made her way over to where the Bira was standing. Then she sat down on the ground and held her withered little legs. "Come nearer, my child," said the Bira, reaching forward. "No! No! I can't come any nearer," cried the girl. "My legs hurt so much, and I am all diseased." "Very well, I shall kill you," replied the Bira. "Oh, please don't do that, I'm only a poor deserted child." "But why did your father leave you all alone?" asked the Bira. "No, I must certainly kill you."

And he took a piece of wood and tried to strike the little crippled Pygmy girl. But the wood flew back in his face and hit him on the nose, and the blood streamed down. With the blood still streaming down he ran back to his village and told everyone: "There is a poor deserted Pygmy girl in the Pygmy camp. She is crippled and diseased, and she has the evil eye. She will surely kill us all." And with some friends and relations he hurried to the deserted camp.

There was the little girl, sitting on the swing, swinging herself back and forth, back and forth. The Bira called to her: "Come here, my poor child. You have killed one of our relatives, and you have wounded me. You are crippled and diseased, and you have been deserted. I am going to kill you."

The little girl got down from her swing and slowly

[P. 267-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 268-A]

539 825 • 186 came over to where the Bira was standing. "Come nearer, little one!" said the Bira. "Oh, please don't kill me," said the Pygmy girl, "I am only a deserted cripple, and I haven't run away." But she came closer still. The Bira raised his knife. "Now!" he said," "Now, I am going to kill you!" But the knife caught in his stomach, and he fell down, he fell down dead.

The girl went back to her swing, dragging her withered little legs along the ground. And she climbed on the swing and swung herself back and forth, back and forth. The remaining Bira all hurried back to their village.

"Come! Come! Come, all of you!" they cried. "There is a crippled little Pygmy girl in the deserted camp, and she will surely kill us all unless we kill her. Get your spears, and come!" And all the Bira villagers seized their spears and came running to the deserted camp. They all came to take their revenge and kill the deserted little Pygmy girl.

But the girl had gone.

The only sign of life was the *fifi* bird, and the *fifi* bird was sitting on the rattan vine, swinging itself back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

Basi

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
771 tion we find in the legends between the natural
772 (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

[P. 270-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 272-A]

538 171 181 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest in the past, with a corresponding lack of interest in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposition typical of forest people between the animal and the human worlds, more significant differences appear in the legends. One such difference is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class the villagers with the animals, in association with the spiritual world, the world of trickery, in opposition to the human world. Then there is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to the forest as the provider of all that is good as well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers who regard the forest as a place to be feared, the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by the different magical and religious approaches of the two people. The legends tend to confirm the validity of my suggestion that the prime function of the Mbuti magico-religious system is to maintain normality in the relationship between the people and the forest. The villagers seem more concerned with disorders and abnormalities and appear to have no such use of song as that I have described for the Mbuti, making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 182 771 171

538 121 To understand the meaning fully in each type of legend, we need to know who told it, to whom, with what accompanying mime, to what effect, and under what circumstances. Given such surrounding details, we could use legends and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 202-87]

cult subject of sociological study, the magico-religious system. In the absence of such details we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this collection of legends there seems to be ample justification for supposing that the rejection of villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

The legends further emphasize the sanctity of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main ways in which the Pygmy maintains his distinctness from the villager. But the importance of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the difference between Schebesta's account of the archer *turé* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net

[P 274-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 274-C]

hunters). Even in situations that do not directly associate the two groups, the Mbuti thinks in terms of his ethnic status. Thus, when the villagers were taxed by the administration and exemption was granted to all Mbuti, the point at issue among the Pygmy hunters when they discussed the matter was whether or not such exemption was a slight on the Mbuti, placing them somehow on a lower level than the tax-paying villagers. At least one Mbuti felt so strongly that he secured the necessary money and insisted on paying. The majority, however, compromised by saying that they were different people, so why should the same law be expected to apply to all?

The villager himself opposes the two worlds just as does the Pygmy. While he always tries to include the Pygmy in social, economic, and political fields, there is a rejection at the magico-religious level. In the *nkumbi*, the villagers seemed to be both aware of and unconcerned with the formal rejection by the Mbuti of villager values associated with initiation; the villagers failed to introduce their *molimo* into the ceremony, presumably because there were no villager boys present.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.275-A]
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is even the formalized manifestation of this respect mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) when the Bira villagers offer first fruits to the Mbuti.

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The Mbuti, on the other hand, when they are in the presence of the villagers, do not openly assert their own attitudes and values but, rather, reinforce those of the villagers, telling stories of the terrible things that can happen in the forest and of the difficult and dangerous life there. The Mbuti regard the villagers as uninitiated foreigners, alien if not actually hostile, to their own forest world. They therefore tolerate, it would appear, the fanciful beliefs of these outsiders, effectively preventing the villagers from entering the forest, either physically or spiritually. The villager is afraid to enter the forest, and his belief in the evil nature of the forest erects an effective spiritual barrier between himself and the Mbuti. The taboos and magical practices that he observes are in accord with his religious beliefs and his system of

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P values. To the Pygmy, however, these same
• 186 practices are meaningless, as they do not con-
form with his own notions of the forest world.
181 There is, consequently, a hiatus in the relation-
Z ship between the two people or rather a hiatus
181 between their relative systems of values and
their structural relationship. For a proper understanding of the situation we need a great deal more data, the gathering of which should be one of the foremost tasks of any field-work project.

P With reference to such a project, there ap-
121 pear to be two main needs. First, there is a need for detailed studies of representative hunting bands, both archer and net hunter, and of their relationships with their villager neighbors. Second, we need as large a number of such studies as possible for purposes of comparison, not only according to economic technique, but according to other possible systems of classification by structural principles or by degrees of affiliation to different villager tribes. The second need will be fulfilled simply by an extension of the first project. This initial project must necessarily cover not only a single band but other hunting bands with which it is associated through bonds of marriage or for any other reason that may become apparent. At the moment, the single hunting band appears to be the major effective political unit. Such single hunting bands are loosely associated only through

[P 275-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[318] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fol

ing an ever-present, ever-accessible sanctuary of independence, then we are left with a situation which, if anything, is rather the reverse of what it is normally stated to be; for we find that the villagers have far more need of the Mbuti than the Mbuti have of the villagers.

Here we have to look briefly at the historical genesis of the relationship, which began with the invasion of the first non-Mbuti tribes three or four hundred years ago, and continued until the invasion reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Mbuti found themselves caught between a number of warring tribes, and according to legend (also according to what one might reasonably expect) each isolated hunting band found it convenient to attach itself to one or another group of villagers. The villagers, on their part, needed the Mbuti as guides, scouts and spies, and, as related today by both sides, employed them as such, feeding them in return. When the situation became more stable, and notably when the last vestiges of open hostility were suppressed by the Belgian administration, this original relationship came to an end, neither side having any absolute need of the other. The Mbuti, however, had developed a strong taste for plantation foods and maintained their demands on the villagers. To this day, if a villager does not accede to such demands his plantation is simply raided and he has no recourse. Recognizing the difficulty of making an effective claim for theft, the villagers continued to supply food at request, but attempted to secure certain services in return.

We have already mentioned the attitude of the villagers toward the forest as a hostile place, and a place that they people with evil spirits. One of the services that they have tried to elicit from the Mbuti, then, is the supply of forest necessities such as saplings and leaves for housebuilding, bark for clothmaking (now almost obsolete among all the villagers), and meat and honey. The longer a village is in existence, the more scarce these supplies become in the immediate vicinity, and the villagers are mostly loath to venture far into the forest. However, plainly, as with the Mbuti, it is a question of convenience rather than necessity, though the Mbuti say that the villagers could never be successful as hunters, being far too clumsy and slow.

This is all largely a matter of historical conjecture, but it helps in providing a sense of direction, and in indicating that the onus for maintaining a reasonable degree of reciprocity is all the time upon the villagers, not upon the Mbuti. For today the villagers are still unwilling to go into the forest, and the Mbuti are still their major source of meat, honey and building materials. But there is, today, an addi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Rega populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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tree and the Mbuti alleges that the villager stole the stem by trickery, leaving him only the leaves, so that the villager was able to replant the trees and grow more, but when the Mbuti planted the leaves they just withered and died.[a] It is seldom that the Mbuti deny possession of the stolen goods; what they deny is the act of stealing. But whatever the fact, and however judgment is given, the essential point is that there is no mechanism for enforcing that judgment. Judgment being given by a villager is in my experience without exception against the Mbuti, and orders restitution of the property, or service in lieu. If the Mbuti complies, however, it is merely because in his own estimation it is expedient to do so. If he feels that he has exhausted the goodwill of the injured villager he will simply leave, and thenceforth deal with another villager. If any attempt is made to inflict physical punishment on an Mbuti, or to imprison him, then the whole band will initiate reprisal raids on the plantations of the individual who brought the complaint. This seldom happens, because villagers seek other means for achieving some measure of control over the Mbuti, and it is with those that we shall now concern ourselves.

[a] See Appendix I: "The Legend of the Mbuti Plantation."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind, so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwasa villager and died within a few months.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

that way toward the villagers, who are like animals, they also are forced to recognize that the villagers may feel similarly released from laws that would otherwise prevent them from using sorcery as a means of revenge. The villagers, in point of fact, usually deny actually using sorcery, even against the Mbuti, but they admit to using the threat of it. They do, however, use the doctor, who also has access to supernatural powers for the social good, but this involves religion rather than witchcraft or sorcery. It is mentioned here because the Mbuti considers the power, not the agent. Be it witch, sorcerer or doctor, it makes no difference; the Mbuti still has no recourse but flight.

Even flight, however, will not entirely remove the sneaking fear that persists despite expressed disbelief in these supernatural powers. And that power is perhaps no small factor in effectively giving the villagers some measure of control, though the villagers happily do not realize it. They simply believe in the efficacy of their magic, and of their supernatural powers.

The extent of the control that comes this way is difficult to measure, and it has to be balanced against the extent to which the situation drives the Mbuti into an even greater reliance upon their forest world, separating the two worlds still further. It certainly can be seen to operate effectively in inducing reluctant Mbuti to fulfill specific bargains. I did not come across any instances where the actual or threatened use of supernatural powers was invoked to control the normal course of the exchange relationship. But there were a number of instances over a twelve-month period in which Epulu villagers invoked supernatural powers to revenge themselves against Mbuti who had behaved with particular irresponsibility.

Three of the cases were of alleged sorcery. Sefu of Epulu village claimed that two Mbuti had accepted beans from him and had not sent him the meat they had promised in return. He said he had employed a sorcerer to make the Mbuti bleed to death if they did not give him the meat. But he lost courage when he thought that the administrator might get to hear of it, and he recanted. The Mbuti concerned sent him a token amount of meat and the matter was considered as settled.

André, headman of the village known by the name of his late father, Effundi Somali, claimed to have himself invoked supernatural aid against an Mbuti who refused to pay him money received by him when he captured a live okapi and brought it to the government *station de chasse*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tion de chasse. This curse, which was of leprosy, was never lifted, to my knowledge, and caused some uneasiness among the Mbuti but mainly anger. So far it has not been effective, either in obtaining the money for André or in bringing leprosy to the Mbuti.

The other case involved the headman of the nearby Ngwana village, who claimed that three Mbuti from the Epulu band had taken a sack of rice from him and had promised meat in return but never sent it. He allegedly employed a sorcerer to curse the Mbuti to death if they did not send the meat. Within a matter of three months all three had died. Two died evidently of stomach disorders that might have been due to or aggravated by poison, which is sometimes used by the Ngwana; the third man died a long way off in the forest under conditions that would make it unlikely that the death was due to poison, though quite likely it was due in part to fear. All three were young and healthy.

There were almost certainly other instances that I did not hear of, where it was claimed that sorcery had actually been used. There were innumerable instances when it was threatened, and also innumerable instances of accusations of witchcraft involving Mbuti. In fact, talk of village witchcraft and sorcery was among the major topics of conversation in forest camps, particularly just prior to and following a visit to the village. Although the Mbuti had no beliefs of their own concerning the manipulation of such supernatural powers, and although they were reluctant to believe that it was more than either a hoax or, as most of them put it, the mere stupidity (*mbafu*) of the villagers, it nonetheless occupied their thoughts. The death or sickness that inevitably followed a curse, happening sooner or later to someone in the same family, was generally accepted by the Mbuti as coincidental no matter how hard the villagers tried to relate it to the curse; but the occasional exceptional instance, such as that quoted, when the three Mbuti died within three months, was enough to cause serious doubt and fear.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in no way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform certain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*, although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility. But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelele* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[a] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [187] [427] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[a] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the molimo.

[621] [156]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket, full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masaliko, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which occasioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1], both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" (*"bachei ba bo"*), "for elephants are like villagers" (*"bambongu bua sopilabatu"*). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They be-
186 gan to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man
825 and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing
245 our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they
186 die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He
825 walked with two spears.[3] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent
245 someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten
996 all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to
186 the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring
829

[3] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself *is* hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers *any trace of hostility. There is a great* abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their paternalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations, and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

"I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

"But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail.

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apa'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 578 602 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonetheless concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [178] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like • [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

Tumbull B-5 (1951-1958) 1961 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *kare*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity, is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any measure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to look to that territory for some Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

4. SONG is associated with the village, and noise is associated with death. The term *akumi* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

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are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of national unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner, because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.

In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the local society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with cross-cutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is significant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being *sinana*, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no question but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and therefore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[1]

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more *akimi* than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

[1] Vita is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usages might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (*bobo*) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kulolo bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of vita clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayuli*, or trickery.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesi, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.308]

THE LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

539
825
186
245

mosa besu bambuti subus'ini eboko. mosa ma batu banji.
In olden times we Mbuti had bananas, before the people of the village.

batu banji baku biai eboko ndasu. su kangis'i.
The people of the village stole the bananas from us. We shared them.

besu bambuti sukonis ekasa, bakpasa bus'i poko. Seyuma mayeli bendo.
We Mbuti took the leaves, the *kpasa* took the roots. That was their trickery.

539
825
186

samba ndaso nde mosa bindamza. akini bambongu pikisi dongasu.
Our plantations of old were good. But the elephants came and troubled us.

basadongis'isu. ba bumis'i tiko su.
They troubled us. They killed our plantations.

bambuti balufa'i, "su samabo? bambongu basu dongibé, babunisasu tiko ndasu."
The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants trouble us so and are killing our plantations."

mangesé, mangesé mangbo, alufa'i, "bambongu bapaké su lufus nabé."
An elder, a very old man indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them."

bachahwa balufa'i, "se samabo?" mangesé a lufa'i, "se sipa, bamiki."
The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man said, "You wait, children."

bambongu bakidi. bawanji a las'eboko bokbu. ba wanjis'i bana tiko.
The elephants came. They began to eat the bananas. They began to destroy the plantation.

bachahwa bachu'i aka mangesé, balufas'i, "ombo, epa, bambongu bkidi; ba bunis tiko ndasu."
The youths were afraid and ran to the old man, saying, "Oh! Father, the elephants have come; they are destroying our plantation."

"ndamza. me mus ka totiambino. beningbokbu mu likosa; nekobi amenengo." mangesé a ka d'i su tiko.
"Good. I shall go to chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet." The old man went to the plantation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

a hamia'e nengo. engbue na dodo nengo. bambongu ba li sipi.
He cried greatly. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him.

balufu, "nde'i'i? bachalwa kabapiki dongonu, paka mongesé a pili ngamo nde ndawa sales kobia nasu."
They said, "What is this? The youths have not come to trouble us. Only an old man has come. Good, we shall eat quietly."

bales abokoru, bachalwa bakobia nengo ape.
They ate many bananas, the youths stayed very quiet in the camp.

mongesé a kami, "Ah! bamiki bamo bau. Ah! bamiki bamo buma?"
The old man cried, "Ah! my children, all are dead. Ah! my children, where are they?"

bambongu be'oki, balufu'aka mongesé, "engbe ue ka mi? bachalwa buma? su las tiko bokbu."
The elephants heard, they said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? The youths are where? We shall eat the whole plantation."

mongesé a lufu, "las, las ngbokbu. bamiki bamo baku." a kami.
The old man said, "Eat, eat everything. My children are all dead." He continued crying.

bambongu balufu, "akini ue mua bamiki ai engbe e'ebaku?"
The elephants said, "But you have many children, how did they die?"

mongesé a lufu, "nde keti, keti mu phele'a. a tambi na kongi eberé nde bia nengo, arwa na ue.
The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. It walked with two spears. It was very fat, like you.

"aku bokbu, ma mongia na'u kapié aboko, keti a mua'a, a nia'a.
"Every day I sent someone to cut bananas, the evil spirit killed him, it ate him.

"makati i'o'elaé, bamiki bamo bokbu. a aiambende nde tiko nde'a, batu bakidié, a muangbokbu.
"Now it has eaten all my children. It said it was its plantation and whoever came it would kill them all.

"ah! bamiki bamo baku bo'u. engbe'e keti kadongimbe tiko ndetina?
"Ah! My children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not trouble some other plantation?

"engbe a loki tiko ndamo?" mongesé a kami, a ka.
"Why did it come mine?" The old man cried, he went away.

2: Turnbull E-S (1961-1968) 1985 FO: Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539
825
186

bambongu baluhu, "*Ah! akini keti nde ainna, a loki tiko ndamané, su bua ka komanda; nuke umuna, kube su muna.*"
The elephants said, "Ah! But if the spirit is that bad, and has cursed the plantation, we had better go elsewhere; let us go quickly, before it kills us."

gunde bambongu bua sapilabetu bwanji, boche'i baketi bobo.
Because elephants are like people of the village, they are very afraid of spirits.

ba ke, ba ke, kundwa. mangusé a aki bantiki bokbu.
They went, they went very far. The old man called all his children.

a hufu, "*bambongu ka ba pika wowa. ba biainia kuma keti masinana.*
He said, "The elephants will not come back again. They think this is a place full of bad spirits.

"*su likia kobia nasu tiko ndam.*
"We shall remain quietly in our plantation.

"*botu betina bunda bamedonga.*"
"Nobody else will bother us."

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
533 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them
[192] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
• 186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing.

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect.

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekianga and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekianga, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever.

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

763 761 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest."

[765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 [555] Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said. [829] [186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we [768] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekiangi's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they [152] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he [823] talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

3r Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. "She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted. Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest—about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mushrooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but not so far that old Tunguna could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were crying to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed themselves perfunctorily in the Nepusi and returned to the camp to start preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery; this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make the forest happy again.

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamaikan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach, gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro plantations at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

3x Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

St Turnbull E-S (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside.

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard.

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo.

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire.

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the

St Turnbull E-S (1951-1960) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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965 ceremonies of the local Negro tribes, nor did it follow any prescribed
[534] ritualistic details beyond a general over-all pattern. It was plain that
[918] the molimo trumpets were not considered as highly sacred objects in themselves; what was important, for some reason, was the sound
• [184] they produced. It was also very clear that the people of the forest wanted to be quite sure that the village world was well sealed off, because before the men gathered together that evening I found that the path leading out of the camp toward the village had been closed. A fallen branch and some logs had been dragged across it, shutting out the profane outside world.

The molimo of the Pygmies is not concerned with ritual or magic. In fact, it is so devoid of ritual, expressed either in action or words, that it is difficult to see what it *is* concerned with. Every day, around midday, a couple of youths would go around the camp, just as they had done this day, collecting offerings of food and firewood from hut to hut, for the molimo concerns everyone, and everyone must contribute. And each evening the women and children shut themselves up in their huts after the evening meal, for the molimo is mainly the concern of the men. And when the women have retired the men sit around the kumamolimo—the hearth of the molimo—and gaze into the molimo fire. Nearby a basket hangs, full of the offerings of food that will be eaten later. But first the men must sing, for this is the real work of the molimo, as they say; to eat and to sing, to eat and to sing. Yet behind these apparently simple outer trappings of the festival there was an atmosphere of almost overwhelming expectancy.

965 That first night, after I had eaten my meal, I went over to the
533 molimo fire, halfway between Manyalibo's hut and that of his daugh-
534 ter Kondabote and her husband Asuu, where the men were already gathering. I noticed that Amaboso, the singer, was not there. I knew why when, a few minutes after the singing had begun, I heard the voice of the molimo answering, way off by itself in the forest. It

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
MButi

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with: *"Pisa me tabe"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

3: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

578 689 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 • [186] Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually nonexistent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 159 [589] Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food, to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son 685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and 159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped 627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes.

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my

3s Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

538 439 179 776 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail.

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits.

• [186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 179 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Asofalinda, Ekiangs's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village but was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the [776] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

St Turnbull S-6 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

This way she would preserve her reputation and I mine, and there would be no complications. And so it was.

I grew very fond of Amina, and some time later, when I was in a village and became very ill, she walked ten miles every day to see me, and ten miles back. She brought me refreshing fruits and sweet-smelling plants and flowers, and sat beside my bed without saying a word. Only once, I woke up and found she was sitting on the edge of the bed and holding my hand in hers.

When the Pygmies moved camp, Amina took the opportunity to go back to her father's village. I was never sure whether I was glad, or more than just a little sorry, to see her go. But when I thought about it, I realized that apart from all the other reasons, Amina could never have stayed. No matter how well she was liked by the Pygmies, she was still a villager. She had not been brought up to do the hundred and one little things that a Pygmy woman has to know how to do. She did not even know how to beat on the hunt, let alone which vines to follow to find the delicacies hidden in the ground by their roots. She belonged to another world.

St Turnbull B-S (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

The familiar night sounds of the forest were replaced by the cries of drunks coming home from a dance at the nearby Hotel de Bière, where an antique Victrola ground out records of the African version of the Calypso, imported from the coast. In the Negro village there were constant fights—not the wordy fights of the Pygmies, but good old-fashioned fisticuffs. These were likely to occur at any time of night, depending on how late it was when an outraged husband, returning from a rendezvous with his current girl friend, reached his own hut to find his wife in bed with someone else.

In our small Pygmy village the fires were all brought inside at night, and the smoke helped to keep away the mosquitoes. The doors were pulled tight shut, and nobody slept out in the open. Just an occasional murmured comment on the noise made by "those black savages" was all that was heard, none of the usual cheerful gossip that used to go on every night until, one by one, the hunters fell asleep.

But in the very dead of night I could hear the sound of crickets from the forest, reminding me that it was, after all, not so far away, and all around us. Sometimes when the moon was full I wandered around the sleeping village, to the edges of the plantations. There the forest stood up into the night like a great black wall, surrounding this small circle, cut so ineffectively out of its very heart. It rose up all around, confident in the knowledge that it would soon claim its own and grow back more thickly than ever, where it had been cut. There were several such abandoned villages nearby, not long abandoned; yet already the forest towered above them in the unsmiling triumph of inevitability. The forest destroyed everything but its own. Only against the machine age, which had barely reached it, was it powerless.

In the very early hours the forest made itself felt, but close as it was it faded far away with the coming of dawn. The morning sounds of cocks crowing, goats bleating, and the elephants of the Station de

3: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki*," he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Ituro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Ituro, just below the falls;

3x Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it *is* important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this *is* unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Maimoongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her bride-

St Turnbull B-6 (1951-1960) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

585 nyungu on the road, and that at the rate he and his friends were going it would take them three days to get back to Bahuma.

When evening fell, Kenge went up to Maliamo for the first time during the entire day and sat down with her as she served the food she had cooked. He brought me over a bowl and said he wanted me to try his wife's cooking. He sat beside me and ate, as he often did, from the same dish. I was a little curious that he had not paid more attention to Maliamo and I asked him about it. He laughed and replied that Maliamo was no stranger to him; the only difference now was that with Yambabo's marriage to Tapbu, Maliamo was able to come to his village instead of his having to go to hers. He had [583] given her father an antelope; why did the villagers have to make all this fuss? He abruptly turned the conversation back to more important things—did I or did I not like his wife's cooking? I did.

585 1779 186 At the central fire everyone was discussing the way Kenge had treated the villagers. They were mostly secretly delighted, but Masisi said that even if Munyungu was a drunken fool, there was no need to be quite so rude to him; that Kenge should have stayed, as he and Moke had done, and merely sat and said nothing. Mulungu, remembering his own wedding, said that he could see no sense in a village wedding anyway. But Masisi pointed out, "If we did not let the villagers think that they arrange our marriages, then how could we expect them to give us such fine feasts and present us with so many gifts?" Moke, picking up his pipe and passing it to his son to be filled, added, "After all, it doesn't really make any difference; you are not married properly until you give your in-laws a forest antelope. If you don't like your village wedding, don't give the antelope."

And so, everyone agreed, a village wedding was great fun, but "*bale*"—empty. It was completely empty, completely and absolutely. With that they laughed loudly and slapped one another on the back, and forgot all about it.

2e Turnbull 8-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and setting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakoa. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakoa, Chief Kachusi was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

Kachusi was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend, and with great aplomb the powerful old man called for another chair to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

St Turnbull E-5 (1961-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 ●
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabuto actually came so far into the forest. The old man said that they did, but not very often. They came to dig traps or set up spear-falls for elephant. They both laughed at the strange hunting methods of the villagers. The digging of a trap was a long and arduous task, as was the setting up of a spear-fall. The latter method is particularly difficult. A stout spear blade is hafted into a heavy tree trunk which then has to be hauled up high above the ground. A vine is stretched underneath and acts as the trigger to release it. But the animals soon come to recognize any kind of trap and simply avoid it. We passed several, and sure enough we could see the tracks going right up to the edge, then carefully circling around in safety.

Kenge could not get over the notion of hiding from an elephant among the roots of a tree instead of going out and spearing it as any Pygmy would. For the rest of the day, whenever we passed an elephant tree he would dodge in among the roots, while the old guide pranced around outside pretending that he was the elephant, stooping down and swinging one arm loosely in front of him as though it were an elephant's trunk.

This slowed our progress, and in the late afternoon our guide suddenly put on pace. It was nearly dark when we climbed up a high ridge and followed it for a mile or two. At the end, before descending, we stopped and listened, and from down below, to the left, we heard the unmistakable sounds of a Pygmy camp—chattering, laughing; children playing and babies crying; and here and there someone singing. It was like being home again, and Kenge was all for going straight down. But our guide made us wait while he went ahead and warned of our approach. It would have been perfectly possible for the camp to have been deserted by the time we reached it, if the Pygmies had thought that we were in any way undesirable company. As it was, when we finally appeared they all stood around in a silent and curious circle to welcome us, each family outside its hut, uncertain and shy.

St Turnbull S-S (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kawaki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been extremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, movie-makers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

Jr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

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to go into the forest to visit some of his Pygmies and had come to pay our respects first. He said brusquely that he did not know where any Pygmies were to be found. Then he looked at Kenge and asked him if it was usual for a Pygmy to sit beside a white man.

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Kenge countered by asking if it was usual for a big chief to keep a white man waiting while he slept, and to leave him sitting on a log without so much as a glass of water to drink or to wash with. At that the other villagers began joining in, and feeling more than uncomfortable at being made the center of a fight between them and Kenge, I told Lupao that we were very tired, and asked if it would be all right for us to stay the night in his village. Lupao, who by then was engrossed with a steaming bowl of chicken soup, said he supposed so, and indicated with a nod of his head for his son to go and find us a place to sleep.

I made a few more attempts at polite conversation but did not get so much as a look in response. Everyone was silent, staring either at us or up at the smoky roof above us. It had been quite dark for some time, and after waiting to see if the son was going to do anything about sleeping quarters, I got up and said loudly to Kenge that I was going to sleep in the car and asked if he was going to do the same. He replied that he would sleep outside to guard me from the thieves and murderers that made up the entire population of the village. This was putting it a little more strongly than I had intended, and we had now given real cause for offense. As we left there was a stony silence. Lupao refused to look up and allow me to take my leave of him. I can hardly blame him, but the tradition of hospitality among most African villagers is so strong that one comes to accept it and to expect it, and the behavior of the BaLese was very unusual.

When Lupao saw that we were really leaving in such an unceremonious huff, he called his son, who had remained in the hut all the time, and sent him running after us to tell us that a house would

St Tumbull E-S (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

be ready soon. Kenge replied that the car was clean, which was a little too subtle for the young man. He returned half an hour later with some food, and this time Kenge was more direct. He lowered the window of the car enough to say, "We people of the forest don't eat excrement!" and then hurriedly wound it up. We passed an uneasy night, and in the first glimmer of morning, without so much as looking for a stream to wash in, we left. Nobody even came to watch us go.

We were so exhausted that we decided to call on the Catholic mission at Ndaye and at least get cleaned up. We drove through the little village, and on the outskirts turned onto a steep stone track that wound up the hillside. It climbed erratically past a temporary church, near which rough-hewn stones were being assembled for the building of a more permanent structure, and onto a ledge just wide enough to hold the long, low mission house and a neat terrace in front, where the ground dropped away sharply.

The welcome we got there was very different. A huge, bearded figure in white robes came striding up the hill after us, shouting instructions in KiNgwana to cook another half dozen eggs. To us he said, "You are late for breakfast." And after a second look, "You need hot baths."

Father Longo would not hear of our going anywhere else and insisted that we stay for at least a week, a month if we liked. There was plenty of work we could do and we looked as though we needed to go to church. Then he asked me if we were Catholics. When I replied that I was a not very good Protestant and that Kenge was a practicing heathen, he roared with laughter and said that at least Kenge didn't know what a mistake he had made. His good humor put Kenge immediately at ease, and there was only a momentary flicker of doubt when Father Longo called for his Lese catechist to show Kenge where he could wash, eat and sleep. Shortly afterward I heard him in the distance, telling his new companions in his loudest

St Turnbull 8-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 had never seen even a hill, as such. He had climbed up them, inside the forest, and had seen small hills such as the one on the far side of the Epulu, and the one on which the Nduye mission stood, but that was all. One evening, however, we were both sitting on a boulder at the highest point of the Bisiiku mission, looking over the forest. To the east the sky was becoming less and less hazy, and gradually out of the haze a great black mass began to form. Kenge saw it before I did, and asked if it was a bad storm cloud. It was the vast bulk of the Ruwenzori, the Mountains of the Moon.

We never saw the peaks, but even the lower ranges towered so far above the forest that Kenge was almost frightened. He asked me about them, and I did my best, but it was next to impossible to describe things of which he had no experience, and for which there were not even any appropriate words in his language. His curiosity was thoroughly aroused, and feeling a slight hankering myself to see that lovely part of Africa again, I asked him if he would like to have a holiday and go over there, to see the outside world for himself. He hesitated a long time, and then asked how far the mountains were beyond the forest. I said that they were not more than a day's drive from the last of the trees, to which he responded with disbelief, "*No* trees? *No* trees at all?" He was very dubious about this, and asked me if it was a good country, and what the villagers were like there. I told him that it was very much like my own country in some ways, that it was very good, and that there were few villagers.

This decided him and he agreed to go, providing that we brought enough food to last us all the time we were to be out of the forest. He was going to have nothing to do with savages who lived in a land without trees.

4: Putnam E-5 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

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In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

4: Putnam E-S (no date) 1948 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Zaire PO1

which occurred during its period of isolation. This not only forms a strong bond between the pygmies and their hosts but it gives them a formal sequence of age grades in their own society. There are no special scarifications or other insignia for each class; it is a common experience to hear one person asking another, when strangers meet, "What class were you in? I am a Hurricane," and so forth, just like Harvard alumni asking each other what class they were in, and whom they knew, over a drink.

Pygmy Locomotion

The pygmies are very expert at getting about through the forest, and especially at moving swiftly through the thick undergrowth that a white man would have to chop down with a machete before he could enter. To a Negro, a white man trying to get through seems clumsy. To a pygmy a Negro seems clumsy. Schebesta observes that the small size of the pygmies makes them better adapted to locomotion in the forest than the larger Negroes and whites.[1]

The pygmies jump over fallen logs, and make their way using hands and feet—hands to toss dead branches and trunks aside. They can actually run through this tangle, and while so doing they sometimes pick up fallen logs and throw them so they will crash at a distance, to mislead pursuers, or game which they are stalking.

They are also very expert at climbing; the children practice this from babyhood. Their technique is far from simian, but a widely distributed method, similar in principle to that of a lumberjack. The climber cuts two

[1] Schebesta, P., *Revisiting My Pygmy Hosts*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936, pp. 78-99.

[P.325-B]